

REMARKS

After the foregoing Amendment, claims 1-48 are currently pending in this application. The specification and claims have been amended in the same manner as in the Reply to a Written Opinion for the corresponding PCT application (PCT/US03/38223), after which a favorable International Preliminary Report on Patentability was issued on December 16, 2002. A copy of the International Preliminary Report on Patentability, which indicates that claims 1-48 meet the criteria set out in PCT Article 33(2)-(3) with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability is submitted herewith. The Applicants submit that no new matter has been introduced into the application by the amendments.

The Applicants respectfully submit that the presently claimed invention is patentable over the prior art. Prompt consideration and allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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